IN THE BEGINNING

Turkey Creek Church

Published Quarterly By
Woodson County Historical Society
Yates Center, Kansas
Vol. 5 - No. 17

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Vol. 5 - No. 17 January - 1972

Lester A. Harding - Editor

EDITOR'S NOTES —

If there is a square marked with red ink in the front of this it will indicate your subscription has come to an end. We have had quite a few respond from this method in the last issue.

We have at least two corrections to make in the October 1971 (No. 16) issue. The last day of school in Dist. No. 69 was not in 1959-60, as stated, but a couple of years later and the teacher was Mrs. Dorothy Bower.

In the article about the Catholic Church at Piqua it was called St. Francis instead of St. Martin's Church.

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The cover picture of this issue is the Turkey Creek Church located ten miles northwest of Yates Center. It is the oldest rural church in years of service in the county. In October, 1971, the congregation observed the 95th anniversary of the first class at Turkey Creek and the 80th anniversary of the erection of the church building. The Turkey Creek congregation has served under three different denominational names. Starting out as the Evangelical Association, then the Evangelical United Brethern and now the United Methodist. The first class organized for this church was a class of ten people all named Weide, in 1876. The Turkey Creek Church is still active with an average of 33 attendance for 1971.

This first class was organized at the home of Carl Weide who lived about a quarter mile west of Burt.

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In the telling of family histories we try to follow the custom of giving the names and families of three generations. In telling of the Peter Smith family we find we have run into the most names of any family history so far in this quarterly. It is possible that we may have missed some unintentionally, but we find that we have listed 127 names connected with this family, and that is just three generations!

Incidently we find that the names of different persons listed in the various issues of IN THE BEGINNING, run from 157 to 350. We are making an index of these different names and where they can be found.

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Published Quarterly By
Woodson County Historical Society
Yates Center, Kansas

$2.00 per year 50 cents a copy

WOODSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized March, 1965

The 1971 season for the Woodson County Historical Museum was from July 3 to October 31. During this four month period there were 519 people registered.

The membership for the Society remained about the same as 1970, with around 213 members.

The Museum closed for the winter on Sunday, October 31. The 20th Century Study Club and the Yates Center Lion's Club, both took tours of the Museum as a part of their regular meeting.

The September and November, 1971 meetings of the Woodson County Historical Society were held at the Veteran's Hall with a covered dish dinner. At the September meeting, Milton Phillips was in charge of the program, displaying a part of the Phillips collection of Indian artifacts and telling how many of them were made and used. This is a very interesting collection.

At the November meeting the Heart Association had charge of the program. Chuck McNeil, Eastern Field representative from the Kansas Heart Association at Topeka showed a film and made a short talk. There was also a question and answer period.

A Kansas Heart Association Traveling Trophy had been presented by Mrs. Cecil Tannahill, chairman of the Woodson County Heart Association for being second highest in the state in collections on the fiscal fair share basis for 1971, after being first for the previous two years in succession. This plaque was presented to the Woodson County Historical Society for display in the county Museum.

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In Memorium

John W. Lewis 68 October 18, 1971

Mr. Lewis was born and raised in Yates Center, but has lived in Topeka for sometime. He was one of the first take out a Life Membership in this Society in 1969.

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Less than seven years old the Woodson County Historical Society has grown into a strong organization with a well known and well kept Museum. It is one of the few in the state that has a quarterly publication and also one of the very few that holds regular bi-monthly dinner meetings with a special program.

Join and Support the
Woodson County Historical Society

Membership Dues

Life Membership - $25.00 Regular Membership - $2.00 per year

THE STURDIVAN FAMILY –

During the Revolutionary War, in which the American Colonies were fighting England for their independence - 1875 - 83, a John Sturdivan enlisted in the British Army and was sent to the Colonies to help defeat and put down the rebellion. After the war was over the British soldiers returned to England.

However this John Sturdivan was much impressed with the new world, and told his brothers what a nice country this was - so much land not settled - with many acres of timber, coal, ore and other minerals not developed. About 1790 the three brothers came to the States, landing in New York. The brothers were John, Joseph, and Samuel. The name Sturdivant was the correct spelling, but some left off the "T".

Joseph Sturdivant made his way eventually to Springfield, Illinois. He was married to an Irish girl named Maggie. They had four sons and a daughter. One of the sons was named Charles, who married Elizabeth Clark in 1838 at Springfield. Among their ten children was John Harrison and the last name now was spelled Sturdivan. John H. was born near Rock Island, Illinois, in 1855, when he was 13 years old he came with his family to Kansas. They settled near Lawrence in 1856. That part of Kansas was in a great turmoil as a part of "Bleeding Kansas", caused by the Border Ruffian War, between Free State and Pro-Slavery groups. After a two-year stay here, 1857, they returned to Illinois, and then again to Kansas in 1860, to near Garnett in Anderson County.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, John H. returned to Illinois where he enlisted in Co. E. 14th Regiment, Mo., Volunteer Sharpshooters.

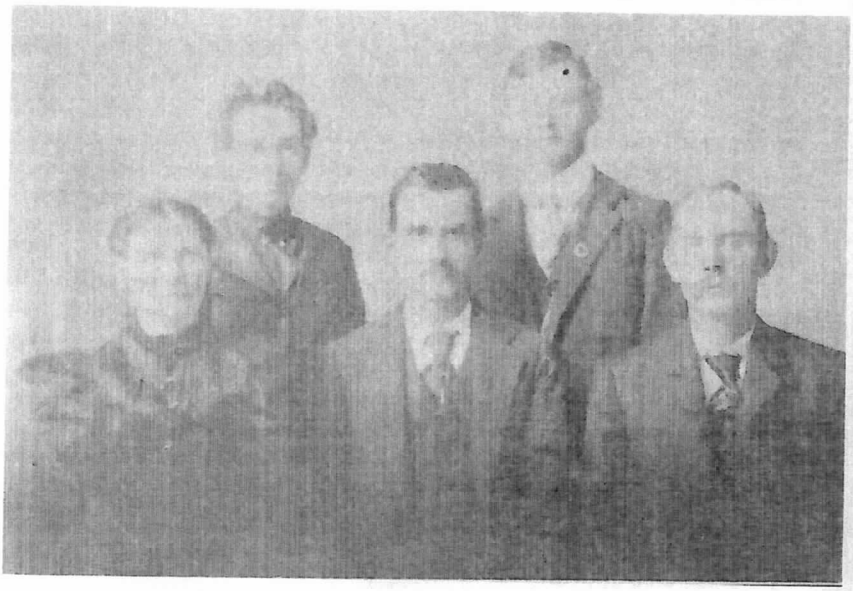
On July 10, 1862, while serving under Col. Mulligan, he was captured by some of the troops under the Confederate Gen. Price. About two months later he was released and returned to his home at Rock Island, Illinois. He received an honorable discharge from the army in October, 1862.

On September 16, 1862, John Harrison Sturdivan was married to Miss Mary Gazena Tebben at Rock Island, Illinois. Here they made their home. On August 5, 1863, Sturdivan re-enlisted in the Union Army. This time in the 126th Regiment of Illinois. He served with this outfit until the end of the war, or July 25, 1865.

Mary G. Tebben was a native of Hanover, Germany, being born there in 1843. Her parents, Henry and Anna Tebbens lived on a farm near Hanover, Germany. In 1852, Henry and Anna Tebbens, their five children, John, Nancy, Mary G., Alfred Enoch and Teno Agnes, left their native home for America. They sailed from Hamburg, arriving at New Orleans, Louisiana, after a voyage of eleven weeks. There by steamboat the family started up the Mississippi River to St. Louis. Here Henry Tebben took sick and died on Christmas Day, leaving the widow and five small children. Mrs. Tebben and children then went to Rock Island, Illnois., where with the help of her brother, Peter Gummels, the family bought a 160 acre farm and improved it. It was here that Mary G. Tebben and John H. Sturdivan met and were married.

In 1869, Mr. and Mrs. Sturdivan and three-year old Myron loaded all of their goods in a covered wagon, and joining a wagon train of seven wagons started for Kansas. The trip from Rock Island to Garnett took six weeks arriving here in November to a farm just west of Garnett that belonged to his father. The following spring, 1870 with their team and wagon they came down into Woodson County, where they homesteaded 80 acres. This was a half mile south of the Coffey County line, ten miles north and two west of Yates Center. Here their daughter Jeanette Rose was born.

In 1878, John H. Sturdivan sold the farm and purchased another farm along Duck Creek and improved it. On this farm in July, 1882, their youngest son, Harry Clark, was born. Later Harry bought this farm and lived there until 1936.



The Sturdivans - Bottom row: Mary G., John H., and Myron D. Back row: Jeanette Rose, and Harry Clark Sturdivan.

Myron Douglas Sturdivan was married to Ida May Montgomery. Their children were Violet, Autumn, Hazel and Rose. Violet married Harrison Varvel, and Autumn married William Jasper in a double wedding. Hazel married Leslie Stockebrand and Rose married Willard Brown.

Jeanette Rose Sturdivan was married to Jesse LeRoy Redick. Their children were: Ray, Grace, Blanche and Olin. Ray married Edna Steele and Grace married Lloyd Reed in a double wedding. Blanche married Earnest Armstrong and Olin married Pauline James. Edna Steele Redick lived only a year after her marriage. Ray later married Cecile James.

Harry C. Sturdivan was married to Minnie Maud Klock. Their children were: Oliver B., who married Juanita Delaughder, Eunice who died at the age of two years. John Milton who married Artimicia Wagner. Freda May who married Leo Kunkle, and Eula Dean who married Jimmie Allen.

The Sturdivan and Redick families lived for many years along Duck Creek in the north part of the country, taking active part in all educational, religious and other civic activities of the community. Especially were they active in the organization and all religious activities of the Wesley Chapel Church.

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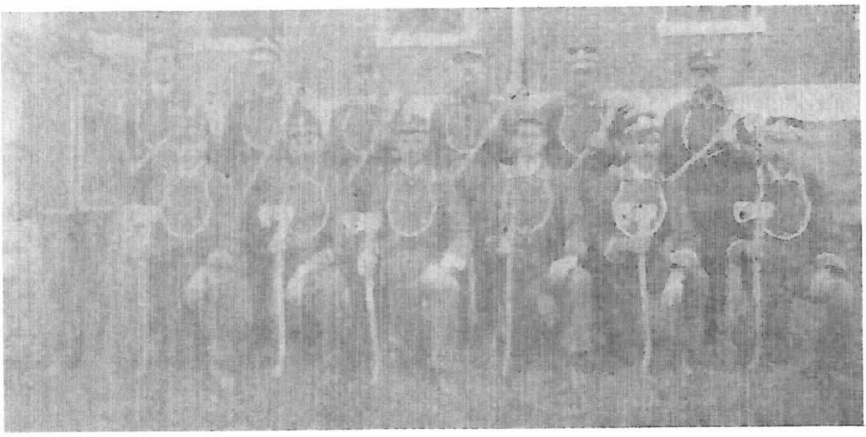
M.W.A. DRILL TEAM OF ROSE, KANSAS –

Around the turn of the century and for around many years later the Modern Woodson of America had many local organizations over Woodson County. Some of these were very strong fraternal organizations. One of these was at Rose, Kansas, that also had a good drill team. In 1904 the Rose drill team along with other teams on this area made a trip to the Worlds Fair in St. Louis, Missouri.



This picture was taken as the group was getting ready to board the train bound for the World's Fair.

Standing left to right are: C. H. McKinsey, drill master; Ben Wolff, John Camac, Frank Peters, W. J. Eagle, Wm. Slater, Charles Mattews. Kneeling are: C. P. Eagle, George Parsons, Ed Elder, Oscar Barton, N. A. Porter and Wm. Patterson.

At the time of this M.W.A. lodge picture was taken, Rose was quite a thriving little town, with several large hay barns in the community as the baling and shipping of prairie hay was the main occupation of that community.

More about the town of Rose will be told later.

PIQUA – BIRTHPLACE OF BUSTER KEATON –

It is a rare occasion when one hears that Woodson County has had a person of some renown born within its borders, but such was the case when the sad-faced comedian, the late Buster Keaton died. Not many if any of the people living in the Piqua area ever saw or met Keaton, but most all have heard the story or stories as there have been different versions of what really took place.

A medicine show was making a one-night stand in the farming community of Piqua. An acrobatic couple, Joseph and Myra Keaton were with this troupe. The story is told that a heavy wind storm came up and the troupe decided not to hold the show in the tent that was set up on a vacant lot along the M.K.T. railroad right-of-way. Permission was obtained from the local priest, to stage it in the Catholic Hall now known as the Knights of Columbus Hall.

This also happened to be the night when a baby was to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Keaton. It is difficult to imagine how a woman in her condition could be active in acrobatics. At any rate Mrs. Keaton was taken across the street to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Haen, a large two story house on the south side of Second Street, which is the main street in Piqua. A baby boy was born that was given the name of Joseph Francis Keaton.

There is still some dissention as to who the midwife was that helped deliver the baby that night. The story was told that Mrs. George Ulrick, who was a favorite mid-wife in that community was called to deliver the baby. It is also told that Mrs. Barbara Haen, in whose home Keaton was born, was the mid-wife. Mrs. Keaton and baby stayed at the Haen home for several days or until they were able to join the traveling vaudeville.

According to an authoràtive story, the Keatons' were appearing at that time with Harry Houdini, the great magician.

The legend of how young Joseph Francis Keaton received the name "Buster." It is credited to Houdini who is supposed to have exclaimed, "What a Buster ", when Keaton fell down a flight of stairs when he was six months old. Mrs. Ulrick also claimed credit for naming Young Keaton "Buster", as she remarked at his birth - "My what a Buster he is." A Hollywood version of the nick-name was that after becoming a part of the Keaton act he was thrown between his father and uncles with such force that he was called "Buster."

In 1935 members of the Keaton family wired Piqua for conformation that he was born there. Mrs. Ulrick, who was still living at that time, replied with a letter giving full details of the birth, but no answer came from the Keaton's.

In 1964 Buster Keaton, in a chauffeur-driven car came through the little town of his birth, but evidently did not want to see much of the town or talk to anyone. He stopped at the depot and spoke to the depot agent, Dick Miller, and drove off. At that time the old two-story house in which he was born was very dilapidated and about ready to fall in. It has since been down,

and nothing remains but the stories that are still being told and retold and many of these differ.

This picture of Joseph Francis (Buster) Keaton was taken in 1956, at the age of 60 years.

He was known as the Great-Stone Face or Deadpan comic and received his fame before the advent of the "talkies" in the 1930's. He was in several of the old silent movies. His fame came as he played the sad-faced comedian part. His death came February 1, 1966. In the last couple of years letters have come to different residents around Piqua requesting that the name of Piqua be changed to Keaton.

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FIRST HERD LAW OF WOODSON COUNTY –

On October 8, 1867, a petition was presented 51 qualified voters of Neosho Falls township to the Woodson County Board of County Commissioners who passed this order.

"We the under signed board of county commissioners of said county, do hereby order that all horses and cattle owned in said Neosho Falls Township sahll be confined in the nighttime for three months after a three weeks notice as provided by law and we hereby instruct the Clerk to post the required notices immediately and to take effect from date."

Given under our hands this 8th day of October, 1867. David Reynolds, H. J. Gregory, John S. Lobaugh.

The Clerk, Geo. L. Wait was instructed to negotiate with the editor of the LeRoy Pioneer for the printing of said Woodson County.

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THE ROBBINS FAMILY –

As a young man of 22 years of age, Levi Robbins boarded a train at his home in Porter County, Indiana, and headed west. He arrived in Woodson County in April, 1870.

His father, S. P. Robbins was a farmer by occupation, coming from the state of Massachusetts to Ohio and then on to Indiana. Here he again took up farming. In 1835, he was married to Caroline Coe. They had five sons: Amos, Levi, James B., Lewis H., and Joseph D. The farming operations in Porter County, Indiana, was turned over to these sons. Levi however, saw more opportunities in the west.

Soon after coming to Woodson County, Levi Robbins bought a half section of land in section 4, Twp. 26, R. 16. This was purchased in July 23, 1870, for $6.00 an acre.

On December 10, 1873, at the county seat of Kalida, Levi Robbins was married to Miss Mary Jane Scott, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. Elijah Scott, who lived about 2¼ miles west of the place where Robbins built his house. Mr. and Mrs. Robbins were the parents of seven children namely –Lillian, Charles D., James C., Frank, Jesse R., Pleasant and Riley.

Robbins prospered and by 1900, he owned twenty-three hundred acres of land in Woodson County. In 1894, he purchased a quarter section of land a mile west of Rose. Here according to the Woodson Advocate of Sept. 1, 1899, Mr. Robbins was "building a $3,000 residence which he and his family will occupy when completed." This is the residence in which Mr. and Mrs. J. R. "Dick" Robbins now live.

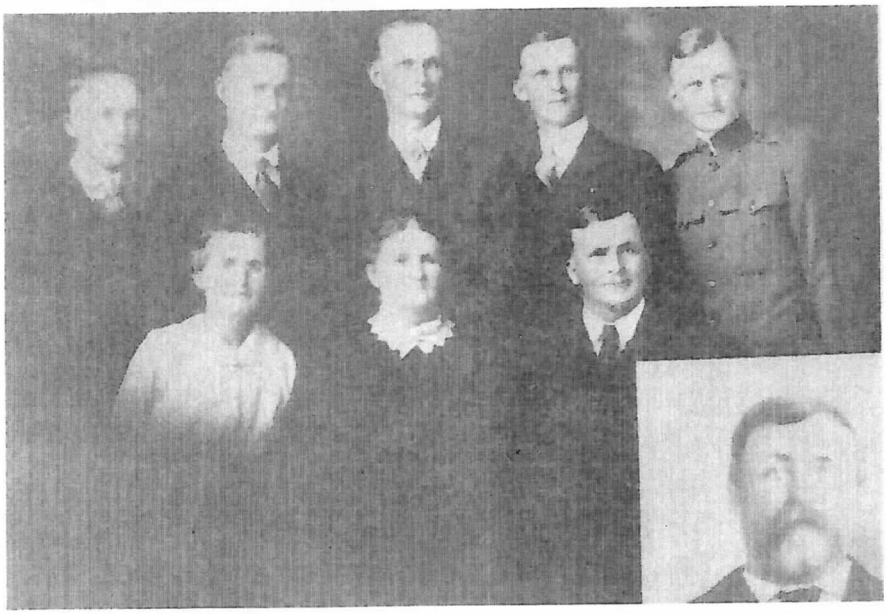
The farm that Levi Robbins purchased when coming here in 1870, is in the Robbins name - the farm where Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Robbins now live.

In the years that Mr. Robbins was active in the raising, feeding and shipment of livestock. His pastures always held the best grades of cattle, horses and hogs. Before the turn of the century, he had turned the operation of the home farm of 1600 acres to his three oldest sons.

Around the turn of the century, Levi Robbins entered the banking business and became president of the Yates Center National Bank, resigning from this position not long before his death in 1910.

Not mentioned above was the oldest son of Levi and Mary Jane Robbins, whose name was Louis. When five years old accompanied his father to Humboldt in a wagon, Louis contacted a bad cold and never recovered from it.

The parents of Mrs. Robbins mentioned above - Elijah and Elizabeth Cox Scott were early day settlers of Woodson County. In 1870, Elijah Scott and family homesteaded 80 acres the east half of the northeast quarter of section 1, Twp. 26, Range 15, along the Parallel line. An inscription on the tombstone of Elijah Scott, in the Kalida cemetery reades — "A pioneer since '61". The Scotts later sold their homestead and moved in the rock house on the farm now owned by J. R. Robbins.



This picture of the Robbins family was taken in 1917, just before Pleasant was to leave for overseas.

The inserted picture is of Levi Robbins, who had passed away in 1910. In the back row, left to right are: Riley, James C., Frank, Jesse R. (Dick), and Pleasant (Pete). Front row: Lillian, Mrs. Mary Robbins, and Charles D.

Taking up the different Robbins families:

Charles D. was married to Lenora Wyse. They had one daughter, Genevive Robbins who married Wayne Jaynes. After the death of his wife Lenora, Charles D. married Miss Bessie West.

Lillian M. Robbins was married to Samuel Shotts. Their children were: Ruth, Levi, Ada, Katherine, Marjorie, Samuel and Becky.

James C. Robbins was married to Elizabeth Ferree. Their children were: Mary Lee and Carl.

Frank M. Robbins married Miss Myrtie Dysert. They had one son Leonard.

Jesse R. (Dick) Robbins married Edna Rush. They have a daughter, Thelma (Mrs. Dale Stoll.)

Pleasant (Pete) Robbins married Josephine Phillips. They have a son, Richard.

Riley Robbins was married to Martha Potter. They have two children: J. Richard and Mary Jane.

Charles, Frank and 'Dick', were all farmers and hay dealers in the Rose vicinity for many years. 'Pete' was a merchant in Burlington for a good many years Riley lives in Sedan.

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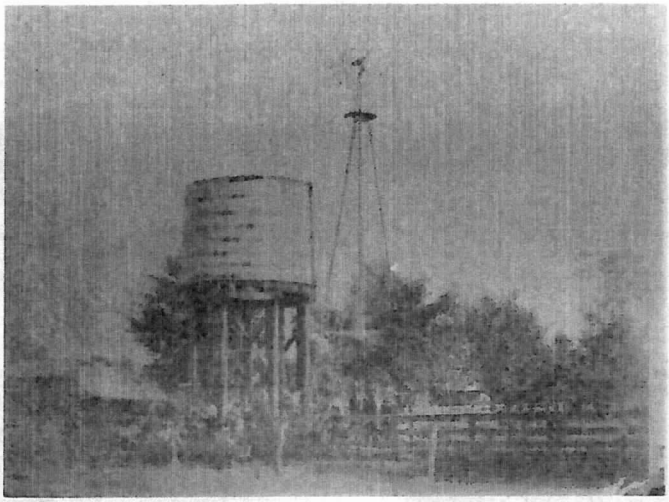
THE OLD WELL IN THE COURTYARD –

In 1897, the town of Yates Center was a little over 20 years old, and had become quite a thriving city and the need arose for a public well to be centrally located. H. T. Laidlaw was mayor of the town at that time, and rather wanted the well to be located toward the southwest corner of the square. His hay headquarters were in that direction. There was no building of any kind in the courtyard at that time, only a board fence that surrounded the courtyard.

Two Jones brothers, Joe and El, were hired for the job of locating the water and digging the well. Using his "dividing rod", which was a forked stick cut from a nearby tree, Joe Jones located a vein of water in the northeast corner of the square. This was just across the street west of the courthouse. Here the Jones brothers started to dig, hiring a young man named William H. Jackson to help them. The first eight or ten feet was mostly dirt. Then the sandstone was hit and the digging became more difficult. Dynamite was used to blast a hole on down through the rocks. At about the 30 feet depth the water began to seep in and then to come in through the rock crevices rather fast. Pumping and bailing water so they could dig some more, the well was dug to a depth of about 35 feet, and 12 feet across.

Native sandrock was brought in from one of the stone quarry's north-east of town. And the well was wall up. The job of building and erecting a water tank was given to C. B. (Cy) Goodale, who lived on a farm in Liberty township.



A windmill was erected over the well, and the large tub-like tank was built in the very northeast corner of the courtyard. The tank was made of cedar staves about 12 feet long, making the tank about 16 feet in diameter and 12 feet high. The tank was erected on a platform about 20 feet off the ground. Wm. H. Jackson was hired to help Goodale erect the tank. Steel hoops were put around the outside of the tank to draw the tongue and groove cedar staves tighter when ever needed.

Besides being used as a public watering place for horses driving in and around town, the well was used as a source of water for the city fire department and also for the street sprinkler. George Spriggs had charge of the street sprinkling at that time. The sprinkler was a large tank pulled with a team of horses. The sandy soil in the streets took a considerable amount of sprinkling during a dry weather.

Sometime after the building of the present courthouse the sewerage pipe sprung a leak and it was feared might be seeping into the old well. An attempt was made to pump the well dry to see. Frank Smith undertook the task of getting the water out of the well. Under steady pumping the water was lowered about ten feet, but that was all. The strong underground stream filled the well as fast as it was pumped out so the attempt was given up.

After almost 75 years, the old well is still used a lot, especially in dry times, when pickup trucks and big trucks with water tanks are sometimes lined up to get water there.

In the picture can be seen the windmill, large wooden tank and a wooden horse watering trough that was put just outside of the board fence.

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TORONTO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS –

This is believed to be the graduating class of 1899 of the Toronto High School.

In the upper left hand corner of the picture is James Webb. Others in the picture although not in order are Lillian Frakes, Charles Sane, Grace Swisher, Earl Weekly, Pauline Kelley, Margaret Swisher, the teacher (not identified). In the lower right hand corner is E. E. Kelley, county superintendent.

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THE PETER SMITH FAMILY –

A family well known over the county and especially along Owl Creek and Yates Center is the Peter Smith family.

Peter Smith was born near Drosam, Prussia, Germany, in March 1834. His father's name was also Peter Smith. When Peter was a small boy his father died. His mother married again, to Peter Yogem. When Peter was eight years old the family came to America. Peter had a sister Margaret. This family came to America and settled for a while in Wisconsin.

While young Peter Smith was only eight years old he evidently had ideas of his own, as he came to America as a stowaway. Arriving in the new world he went to Wisconsin with the family. When he was 19 years old he went to Illinois where he worked for two years, and then moved on west to Kansas arriving in Woodson County in 1857. He first settled in Everett township on a homestead, but could make no legal claim to the land at that time so evidently just used his "squatters rights" for a few years.

In 1859, Peter Smith was married to Henrietta Steffen.

Their children were: Frank, Charles, Henry, John, Matilda, Augusta, Louise and Mary.

Only two years after their marriage Peter Smith enlisted in the Union Army. On December 22, 1861, at the age of 27, at Leavenworth, Kansas, he joined Company C, Second Regiment, Kansas Calvary. His address at that time was given as Leavenworth. With this company he took part in service in Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky and Tennessee. In the battle of Flat Rock, Arkansas he was taken prisoner and sent to Tyler, Texas, where he was a prisoner for nine months or until the end of the war.

Returning to his family, Peter Smith purchased the homestead on Owl Creek in the northwest quarter of section 22, Twp. 25, R. 16. The first cabin for his family was on the east side of the quarter section on a knoll that slopes toward the creek. The cabin was made of native lumber with walnut joists and cottonwood siding. The cabin was later moved to the west 80 acres of the quarter section where it was built onto a couple of times and being made into a two story commodious dwelling. It was here that the large family of children grew up.

At the time that Peter Smith obtained the patent from the U.S. Government for the first 80 acres, D. L. Steffen, had obtained a patent for the west 80 acres. Smith purchased the Steffen homestead in 1871, which was evidently about the time he moved his cabin.

When the Smith family moved to this location their post office was Bath, Kansas. Their farm bordered on the west side of the Peter Yohon farm where the post office was. Their post office was next at Chellis and then to Kalida, and next at Defiance, when in 1873 the townsite of Defiance covering a full quarter section was surveyed just across the road to the north of the Peter Smith home. The main part of the town of Defiance was about a quarter mile from the Smith house.

In 1879, the mother Henrietta Smith, died, leaving the father with eight children. A short time later, in 1880, Peter Smith was married to Catherine Beer-Richards.

Catherine Beer (pronounced Bear), was a native of Trube, Switzerland, where she was married to John Richards, who was also a native of Switzerland. Their two oldest children, Fred and Margaret (Maggie) were born in that country before the Richards came to America in 1869. They lived for awhile in Indiana and Tennessee before coming to Kansas, in 1876. They lived on a farm in Woodson County west of Humboldt, until the death of Mr. Richards in 1879. Their children were: Fred, Margaret, Samuel M., Lydia, Rosa, and Walter. John Richards died in 1879, leaving his widow with the six children. They lived in the "Stonepile" Dist. No. 5 vicinity.

In 1880, Peter Smith and Catherine Richards were married. They had four children of their own: Annie, Peter, Rebecca and Fannie. The total children and step-children of Peter Smith, raised in the Smith home was eighteen.

The picture is of the first family of Peter Smith with the exception of the mother. In the back row is John Smith, Henry, Frank, Charles. Front row are Matilda, Augusta, Louise, Peter Smith, and Mary.

We will try and tell about the families of this large number of people that grew up around the Peter Smith home, although they were never all living there at the same time.

Frank Smith was never married.

Charles was married to Mary Jane Williams. They had one daughter, Mary.

Henry was married to Azelia Taylor. Their children: Myrtle, James, Walter, Harry, Maurice and Maynard. Azelia Smith had previously been married to Eugene Rhea. They had a daughter Meta, who was a year old when Eugene Rhea was killed in a train accident south of Yates Center.

John was married to Catherine Reedy. Their children were Lillian (Mrs. John R. Smith), William, Thomas E., and Madiline (Mrs. Orvil White). A daughter Ada died at age of nine years.

Matilda was married to Edward Kinmonth. Their children were Erma-Robertson and Marie-Bennett.

Augusta was married to Frank Englebrecht. Their children were: Ralph, Ruth, Louise (Mrs. Floyd Pendlay), Fred, Charley, Grace, (Mrs. H. P. Eagle) Alice, Frank and Walter.

Louise was married to John Schoeplin. Their children were: Vernon, John B., and Marie-Jackley.

Mary was married to C. Verne Johnson. They had one daughter, Helen, (Mrs. Lowell Johnson.)

We will take up about the step-children of Peter Smith.

Fred Richards was married to Georgia Bennett.

Margaret was married to George Smith. Their children were: Margie (Mrs. Roy Snavely), Katherine (Mrs. Nathan Leffler), John R., who married Lillian Smith, John who married Verna Tonsler, Fred who was killed working at the iron works and Felma who married Frank Miller.

Samuel Richards who married Virginia Summers. Their children were: Olive (Mrs. Glenn Winterscheid), Thomas who married Elsie Morris and Ada who married John McLaughlin.

Lydia married Bert Wagner. Their children were: Schyler, Clarissa, Lillian, Ralph, Erma Marie and Lawrence.

Rosa who married Charley Smith. Their children were: Ed, Walter and Daisy.

Walter married Margaret Hiestand. Their children were Helen (Mrs. R. Barnett) and Thelma who married C. T. Worthington; Paul and LaNell (Mrs. Wilbur Cox).

The children of Peter and Catherine Smith were: Annie who married Frank Mitchell. Their children were: Franklin, John, Evelyn, and Peter who married Jessie Herder. Their children were: Lorraine, who married Cloyce Opperman; Olive (Mrs. David Evans) and Lawrence, who married Alice Catherine Laidlaw.

Rebecca married Charley Berry. Their children were Kenneth and Charles.

Fannie married L. Dusky VanHoozer. Their children were: Catherine who married Arthur Herder; Loren, Tommy, Frances (Mrs. Wm. Herder) and Kenneth.

* * * * *

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 –

The first school board we find for District No. 43, also known as the Nikkeltown school, was in 1872. The board that year was Campbell Merritt, John B. Sweet and George Carpenter. We believe that these men all lived to the north along Duck Creek. Their post office address was given as Burlington. While the district was organized in 1872 the school was not organized until five or six years later. The first school house was built of native sandstone, built very soon after the German-Russian colony settled here. Just the present school house was built is not certain but possibly around 1900.

Teachers at Nikkeltown Dist. No. 43, beginning in 1881; Libbie Askren, who taught two terms, and then three terms as Libbie Dawson after her marriage to R. T. (Tom) Dawson. 1883, Laura Harris Surber; 1887, E. C. Brown, 1888; W. S. Jones,1889, L. N. Tallman, 1890; A. Nikkels, 1891; Clara Fergus, 1892; L. N. Tallman, 1893; Belle Harding, 1895; Susie Peaks, 1899; S. A. Butler, 1901; Ida Croyle, 1902-03; Della Croyle, 1904; Georgia Melton, 1905; Mattie Reed, 1906-07, Amil Light, 1808-11; Ethel Randall

Old, 1912-13; Nellie Burns Steele, 1914; Ruby Phelps Guy, 1915; Alvina Wrampe, 1916-17; Nellie Burns Steele, 1918; Violet Minton, 1919-21; Cecila Davidson, 1921-22; Pearl Mentzer, 1923; Darlene Shewell, 1924; Harriet Faye Johnson, 1925; Laura Smith, 1926; Lucille Manifold Miller, 1927; Avis Powell DeLaughder, 1928-29; Nell Cannady Smith, 1930-31; Margaret Scott Huff, 1932, Marjorie Tannahill, 1933-35; Florence Manifold Storrer, 1936; Lorene Shepard Rork, 1937; Gladys Peek Naylor, 1938; Hilda Thomas Massey, 1939-40; Mildred Etter Wiley, 1941-43; Elizabeth Steele,1944-46; Mrs. Florence Sicka, 1947; Mardell Culbertson Englebrecht, 1948-49; Mrs. Florence Sicka, 1950-54; Mary Ann Edwards Watts, 1955; Mrs. Jo Newman, 1956; Dorene Jackson Pringle, 1957-61, Mrs. Keo Chance.

The final last day of school supper was held the evening of April 27, 1962. Pupils attending the last term were: Rex Watts, Ronald and Randall Louderbaugh, Donald and Bradley Edwards, Erlona and George Louderbaugh.

The school terms of 1906-07 were taught by Amil Light. The pupils enrolled at that time were: George and Henry Ryser, August, Ida and Sophia Meyers, Earl Owens, Clarence Weide, Bessie and Arthur Barrett, Leona and Mildred Phillipps, Howard Steele, Mary Shaff, Ira Steele.

The school census of 1915 showed the following: August, Albert, Emma, and Fritz Meyers, Lydia Ehrhardt, Marie Wolff, George and Henry Ryser, Clarence Weide, Milton Allen, Lawrence and Bessie Klingenburg, Fred Trawn, Floyd, Alva and Jewell Sheilds, Earl Owens, Flossie, Erma and Claude Willis, Fred and Luella Neufeld. Mrs. Mary Neufeld was the census taker.

Pupils in the front row of the picture are: Erma Willis-Harder, Lola Barrett, Bessie Klingenburg-Christy, Thelma Opperman who was visiting the school that day and Luella Neufeld-Edwards.

Back row: Flossie Willis, Claude Willis, Fred Neufeld, Lawrence Klingenburg, James Tallman, Arthur Barritt and the teacher, Nellie Burns-Steele.

* * * *

JIM DYE – Pioneer Cattleman

Jim Dye, was a well known character and pioneer cattleman in western part of Woodson and the eastern part of Greenwood counties. There were so many tales, both fact and fiction, good and bad about Jim Dye that at one time he was almost a legend. In the summer of 1940 we had quite a convention with Jim Dye out on Dry Creek. He related to us the story of how and when he happened to come to this part of Kansas. We will relate it exactly as he told it to us at that time.

Dye with several other men around Metz, in Vernon County, Missouri, had accumulated quite a few head of cattle. As this area in western Woodson County was a part of the Blue stem region and was mostly all open range at that time the men thought of bringing their cattle here for pasture. About five thousand acres of land in the Dry Creek region belonged to Cross and Wells, realestate dealers of Atchinson, Kansas. Dye made a deal with these men to lease their land, providing that Grover Cleveland was elected as president of the United States in the presidential election of 1892. If Cleveland was not elected they figured their cattle would not be worth driving that far.

Cleveland was elected, and in the spring of 1893, Dye and his associates rounded their herds up together and started from near Metz, Missouri, for the hills and valleys of Dry Creek, Woodson County. The distance was around 70 miles in a straight east and west line. The herd consisted of several hundred head of cattle. There were eighteen riders driving this herd. The cook shack and supply wagon were pulled by a yoke of oxen.

The destination of this cattle drive was the old Holloway place, a mile straight west of the present Kimbell Ranch. Using the old Holloway place as their headquarters, these men herded their cattle over the Dry Creek Valley and on towards Virgil. A place was picked in advance every day where they were to bed the cattle down that night.

When fall came the cattle were driven back to Missouri for the winter. This was done for several years until Dye established his ranch in the hills just over the Greenwood county line. Jim Dye's "Ranch" has shifted several times to different locations over a period of years. His ranch buildings usually consisted of a shack for a house and a shed for a barn. In the early days of his activities here he also used the Dry Creek Cave as his headquarters. At one time Jim Dye's ranch holdings consisted of 14 sections of land. His 101 Ranch, under which caption he promoted rodeo's during the 1930's, was just over in Greenwood County, and consisted of an old oil field shack and some pens. This was just to the west of the Dry Creek Cave.

The appearance of Jim Dye was often misleading for at one time he was considered a wealthy man, yet he generally wore old and shabby clothes. He was very clever and shrewd where again his appearance was misleading. He played the Board of Trade, especially in grain. It was said that he would go into a brokerage office wearing his old shabby clothes and transact more

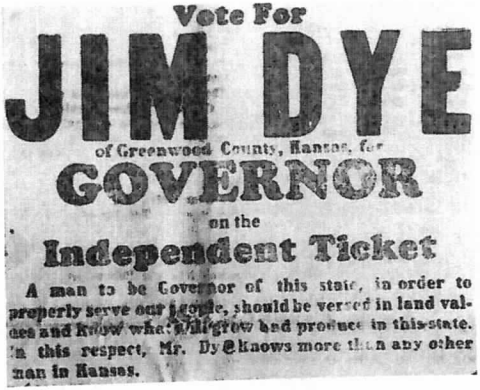
business in 30 minutes than the regular traders would all day.

The first time this writer saw Jim Dye was on the Virgil Road near his headquarters. A couple of cowboys with boots, hats and cowboy chaps were with him, while Dye had on one of those old flat top straw hats, a green dress shirt without any collar and a pair of dress oxfords with the laces untied. I heard my father, George Harding tell that in the latter 1890's, he and Uncle Curt Harding were riding out through the western part of the county, and stopped at the Jim Dye shack about noon one day. An old black kettle of beans was the main bill of fare at the Dye Ranch most of the time. Every so often Dye would take a sack of flour to the Duncan Campbell home a couple of miles to the east and have Mrs. Campbell bake bread for him. She would bake about six loaves of bread for him about every two weeks.

The Kisner brothers, Bill and Frank, came from the same place in Missouri as did Dye. They lived on the old Holloway place for several years. It was told that Bill Kisner rode a small sorrel mare that would ordinarily would just jog along as if both it and its rider were half asleep, but when chasing or cutting cattle, the little pony was hard to beat.

As mentioned the Jim Dye 'Ranch', shifted locations. For several years his headquarters were the old Foster Ranch just across the Greenwood county line. During the 1930's, Dye was a candidate for governor of Kansas in several elections. While he would announce as a candidate he never made the proper filing for the office.

Although he no doubt made a good many enemies in his business dealings, as some of them were said to be on the 'shady' side, it can also be said that to his credit that he befriended many a man in need by leaning or selling on time a team of horses or mules, or some cattle. In his own way Jim Dye was one of the most colorful characters of the old cattlemen of this part of Kansas. While at one time he was considered to be wealthy, he was not when he died in January, 1940. He seemed to have trusted the wrong people of a Kansas City syndicate.


Vote For
JIM DYE
of Greenwood County, Kansas, for
GOVERNOR
on the
Independent Ticket
A man to be Governor of this state, in order to properly serve our people, should be versed in land values and know what will grow and produce in this state. In this respect, Mr. Dye knows more than any other man in Kansas.

Listed with his platform was - HE MADE YOUR SALT CHEAP — This is the same Jim Dye that reduced the price of salt 50 per cent to stockman in this state in 1935.

THE SCATTER CREEK VALLEY –

Along towards the close of the Civil War, a young scout for the Union Army, along with some Indian scouts were riding across the southeast corner of Woodson County. They had camped overnight on the east bank of Owl Creek, along the Parallel Line where Owl Creek divides Allen and Woodson Counties. They were evidently following the trail that went from Iola to Buffalo in Wilson County. Going to the southwest they came to a small valley. From the north the open prairie gradually sloped to the valley while on the south side of the little creek was a range of gravelly hills and steep mounds. The headwaters of this creek and valley have its beginning in Perry township in Woodson County, flowing east into Allen County and to the Neosho River. To the north and west of the valley was open prairie without a tree till Owl Creek.

As the young soldier and his Indian companions rode across the head of this valley the lay of the land appealed to the young man whose name was Ira Nourse. He resolved then that when the war was over he would come back here and file a claim in this small valley.

At the close of the war however, Nourse did not get to come back to Woodson County immediately but was sent by the government into the Indian Territory to help the Indians who were for the Union, roundup cattle belonging to them that had been stolen or run off by the Indian tribes who were Southern sympathizers.

The First Biennial report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture of 1878 lists the first settlers of Perry Township as Wm. Dana, Devore, Ira, Nourse, Jake Milligan, and Charles Toland. They all seemed to come at the same time - in March, 1866. Nourse, Dana and Toland all settling along the little creek in section 22, Twp. 26, Range 17. Other families soon arriving in this vicinity were: Sharps, Lucuis Ladd, Jeremiah Dee, A. Turp, A. D. Talbert, Morse Little and Grove.

The small stream was named Scatter Creek. It is thought the name may have been derived from the fact that the stream did not have much banks and when in time of high water it scattered all over the low land.

Almost surrounded by mounds and hills and valleys on the south branch of Scatter Creek stood the Mound Valley schoolhouse. The first school held in the district was in a small one room frame building along the Woodson–Allen County line and later was moved a mile to the west. Early day teachers of this school were: Mary Berger, Lemira Dickinson, Geo. Quackenbos, Laura Crabb, L. B. Olden, Scott Irwin and Emma Nourse.

A Sunday School was also organized and held in the Mound Valley School house. The first Sunday School organized in Perry township was a United Brethern in 1869 and it was believed to be at this school. Later however, a Congregational church was built on the Allen County side of the county line about a mile north of where Scatter Creek crosses the county line. After this church was discontinued by the Congregational group the building was purchased

by the Rev. Virgil Megill, a U. B. minister. Services were held here and the building was known as Megill's Chapel.

During or immediately following the Civil War when Ira Nourse was in the Indian Territory two of his war-time Indian acquaintances of the Creek tribe - Jackson Barrett and Billy Brown, became close friends of Nourse. Each of these two indians had a boy named for him. In the year 1873 these two boys, Jackson Barrett and Billy Brown, were sent here to the Nourse home to attend the Mound Valley School as there was no public school in that part of the Indian Territory. Barrett who later became wealthy from oil and also famous when he married a white woman, was from Henrietta, Oklahoma.

QUACKENBOS HILL –

As we mentioned in the beginning, along the south side of Scatter Creek was a range of high and steep hills and mounds. Probably the most prominent of these is still known as the Quackenbos Hill. The land on which this hill is located had once belonged to M. A. Quackenbos. It was on this bleak, wind swept hill that a large two story unpainted house stood for many years. It was built soon after the close of the Civil War. Most of the lumber used was white pine with the boards all 18 feet long. The stairway was all walnut. The old house was torn down in 1945.

The story is told that this large house was built to be used as a school for boys with the belief that well-to-do families in the east would send their boys out here for a change of environment and a healthier climate. This school was located about six miles west of Humboldt. Professor George Quackenbos, who was an outstanding school master from Chicago was the originator and organizer of this school. The school itself however did not turn out to be much of a success. The story goes that the boys would run off and go to Humboldt. They did not seem to like the kind of environment that Prof. Quackenbos had planned for them.

Continued in next issue.

Patrons of IN THE BEGINNING

John V. Glades Agency
Woodson Co. Co-op
State Exchange Bank
Street Abstract Co., Inc.
Schornick Oil Co.
Self Service Grocery

Kruegers Variety & Dry Goods
Walter A. Bowers
Hi-Way Food Basket
Farmers Co-op, Piqua
Gualding Oil Co.
Harry O. Ashley
Swope & Son Impl. Co.
H. R. Campbell & Sons Furniture & Undertaking
Clyde Hill
Whelan Lumber Co.
Cantrell Buick-Pontiac
Paul C. Laidlaw
Kruegers Cleaners
Gambles Friendly Store
Roger Bros. Garage
Charles H. Carpenter
Newtex Manufacturing Co.
J. C. Schnell
Wood-Perkins Dept. Store
Woodson Hotel & Cafe

Al's Jewelry
First National Bank - Toronto
Blackjack Cattle Co.
Yates Center Elevator Co.
Jasper's Shopping Spot
Bill Taylor - Gen. Agent Woodson Co. Farm Bureau
Atkin Clinic
Daly Western Supply
Pyeatte-Jaynes Ins. Agency
Dyer Chevrolet Co.
Henry E. Stephenson
Linde Barber Shop
House of Fabrics
Light Hardware

Campbell Plumbing & Electric
Brown's Western Auto
Donald E. Ward
Wilma Mark
Milton Wrampe
E. E. Light
Yates Center News
Everybody's Grocery
Pringle Ranch-J.W. & J. Richard
Baker Rexall Drug Store
Smith Furniture & Funeral Home
Yates Center Skelgas Service
Piqua State Bank

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